

GAY NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SWITCHBOARD

The Gay National Educational Switchboard, the San Francisco based national network of support services for people with gay feelings, discontinued its three wats-line services on December 1st, two months after its opening. During that time over 5,000 calls were answered by 60 trained volunteers, who provided information and assistance to women and men in 48 states, at no cost to the callers.

The Switchboard, which received \$33,000. from The Human Rights Foundation to cover start-up costs, was unable to generate enough additional funds to meet its expenses, including monthly phone bills of approximately \$5,000. A nationwide fundraising drive had been delayed until after November 7th; raising dollars to defeat Proposition 6 in California was until then, the priority for gay people across the country. Even as the results of the election were coming in, the G.N.E.S. moved to mount a "Save The Switchboard" drive. In a race against time, the Switchboard lost.

Callers are now automatically referred to the Pacific Center Switchboard in Berkeley, which will utilize the extensive resource files of the G.N.E.S.

Commenting on the closure of the Wats lines, David Palmer, G.N.E.S. project director said, "The long range goal of the Switchboard has been to stimulate the expansion of support services for gay people in hundreds of communities nationwide. We have clearly documented the need for such services and will use that documentation to develop proposals for Grants from both Foundations and the Government, so that the Switchboard can reopen next year. We are now appealing to all those who were potential donors to the G.N.E.S. to make generous contributions to local gay organizations"

"It seems particularly appropriate that such contributions be made in memory of Supervisor Harvey Milk who was a member of the G.N.E.S. National Support Committee. Harvey spoke often of his concern for those in middle America just coming to terms with their gayness. He saw the Switchboard as one means of "Combating lies and misinformation with the truth". Harvey knew well that getting the "truth" out was expensive. In one of his last interviews Harvey made a statement that was characteristically, to the point: "I think its time to educate the gay community that it's no good having a lot of money if you're in jail because you're gay."

"The time has come for those gay people who can afford to do so, millions of us, to give and give again to the numerous organizations, both service oriented and action oriented, that allow for our individual and collective liberation."

Christian
charity, as far
as
influence
over souls
is concerned,
is futile
unless
it rests upon
the basis of
genuine
COURTESY

Chapter Changes

NEW ADDRESSES

DIGNITY/Omaha (in formation)
138 North 31st Avenue
Omaha, Nebraska 68131
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SPELLING CORRECTION

Region I Director

David Frusti (not Fursti)

Jonestown

by Gordon

(Portions of this article first appeared in Oasis, newsletter of DIGNITY/San Joaquin Valley)

A French newspaper published a large photo of the bodies sprawled around Jonestown with a one-word headline: Madness.

How could almost 900 people be so mesmerized by one man as to commit mass suicide --- they had to be crazy.

It's too much; I just can't understand it.

Those are typical reactions to the recent news from Guyana, that it simply is inexplicable. Yet I believe the suicides can be explained; that what humans can do, humans can understand. Unlike Billy Graham, I do not see this event merely as the work of the devil. In short, I believe that the hold Jimmy Jones had on his followers was as old as tyranny, as omnipresent as evil.

My analysis may be no more comforting to the survivors than a Jesuit syllogism, a zen riddle. Yet there are important lessons to be learned by looking first at Jones, then his followers.

The initial photos from Jonestown resembled pictures from a Nazi concentration camp. Indeed, the more we learn about Jones, the more he seemed like Hitler.

Appealing to a sense of personal and social reform, both Jones and Hitler demonstrated a remarkable ability to convince their followers that only they knew what was best for all. With power came paranoia. Hitler blamed the Jews, Jones the C.I.A., press and Rep. Leo Ryan. Both had dark visions of death and both went out with a Gotterdammerung blaze.

"Instant books" now appearing on news stands reveal Jones' obsessions with sex and death. Indeed, he is now reported to have been at least bisexual. Some of his more fanatic followers claimed miracle cures, and it was whispered around San Francisco's Peoples Temple that he had conquered death. Combine a perverted notion of sex, death, religion and extremist ideology and you have a potent psychotic.

"Fanatics have their dreams, wherewith they weave a paradise for a sect," John Keats noted. That Jones' dream ended in a nightmare of death is spectacular, but not new.

Some of us gay men, for example, have experimented with "S&M". As a 'master' we know the thrill of power, the delicate balance between pain and pleasure. As a 'slave', we know the blessed relief which comes from turning over to the 'top man' all responsibility for one's own behavior.

Jones' followers, likewise, turned over to him responsibility for their own behavior, not just their passports and personal property. Submerging themselves in the group, reinforced by peer pressure and brutish discipline, they surrendered their own innate ability to distinguish right from wrong.

As with the Hare Krishnas, members of Synanon and similar cults, to say that the members of Peoples Temple were 'brainwashed' suggests, in my opinion, that they had few brains to begin with.

In this regard I want to point out to the Eastern media that Jones' cult was not totally comprised of 'California Kooks'. It is true that this state has long been a Mecca for nonconformists, often those - like Jones himself -- who found the Midwest's intolerance itself intolerable.

It's too glib to say that California lures the disenchanted. The followers of Charles Manson and Jimmy Jones may indeed have been runaways, but then who ever heard of running away to Omaha, Nebraska? You can't legitimately blame California itself for these events, any more than you can blame Dallas for the assassination of President Kennedy.

The lure of the West is not limited to religious fanatics, but also appeals, for example to those of us who are gay. The smug bigotry of the Bible Belt gives, and California -- to its eternal credit -- receives.

Most of the members of the Peoples Temple were blacks. That they escaped ghettos only to find a new form of slavery under Jones tells us, perhaps, more about American society as a whole than about Jonestown. Blame it on society if you will. We gays often blame our own oppression on society at large, too. Social upheavals, economic injustice, personal rootlessness ---- all these went into the Witches' brew at Jonestown along with the cyanide and Kool Aid.

What did these people see that we don't likewise pursue? The difference between Jonestown and other cults, sects and - even - denominations is merely one of degree. If it's so crazy to spoon-feed poison to your baby, then why is it so smart to sit in a hotel ballroom

SPEAKING OUT

One of the main debates during conferences and in correspondence I have witnessed, rage with increasing intensity and lack of charity in DIGNITY, has been around the topic of social versus political action.

The Gospel event of Mary and Martha all over again, or so it seems. For me it has become simply an occasion of pain. People in DIGNITY Inc. seem to be taking inflexible positions on either side of the debate.

Arms are extended not in the agape embrace but in finger wagging anger that such and such is the way, the 'only way' to serve. Have we so quickly forgotten the Gospel message of washing each other's feet as He showed us, the Beatitudes and their admonitions of service, that some evil spirits can only be cast out after much prayer and fasting?

Undoubtedly in communities where civil rights are threatened by the repeal or initiation of ordinances causing oppression of gays in any way political, action may well be called for, but does this mean we cast aside our commitment to feeding the hungry, visiting the prisoners, the lonely?

Really, it comes down to a question of trusting Our Lord, living out our faith, to one of Gospel boldness. Do we spend at least an hour a day in prayer, perhaps even a few days in silent prayer and fasting before we debate social versus political action? Are we careful to make sure it is our Father's vineyard we work in or are we risking, via the resentments this pointless debate has generated, sowing weeds about the field in the company of the evil one?

The impact of the first Christian community was not their political clout but the love they had for one another. If we as brothers and sisters in DIGNITY lose sight of Christ, fail to live out the Gospel with our lives, then there is no difference between us and the most purely political of gay-lib groups. Let us stop the finger wagging, the argumentative debating and open our arms in the agape embrace.

We must become people of His Spirit of peace and reconciliation. If we are faithful to His example of the washing of feet, all the other small stuff will fall into place.

Robert Papi
Dignity/Ottawa/Dignité

YOU AND

I

I need you today, tomorrow and always. For you are a person I can feel close to.

For the first time in my life I now realize what is meant by needing someone and letting them close.

To love you and not possess you;
To care about you and not tell you what to do;
To share with you myself and my feeling - and not demand you share.
I will always love, care and share with you, even tho you may not understand.

And now I must share with you myself, which means telling you about me in an open, not guarded, way.

Yes, I have felt lost. And I have found myself.
Yes, I have loved, and in return felt rejection. I will still leave myself open to love again.
Yes, I have told the truth and found myself hurt - so,
I have replaced these with a guarded and sometimes painted picture to you as to who I really am.

I am me. I have a lot of love to share with the right person, I do care about me and will take care of me.

I do care about you and love you - love you in a different way than I love others. To love you means to let you be you.

Ren'ee Johnson - 1975

WORDS ARE IMPORTANT

Not long ago I talked with a woman about DIGNITY. Although she had heard of the organization and had even attended a Mass sponsored by DIGNITY, she was surprised to learn of my involvement. She was under the impression that DIGNITY was an organization for men. The predominance of men and the language used at the liturgy gave her the impression that women were not welcome.

The use of male gender language contributed to the alienation of this woman. Though many people are comfortable with sexist language, there are men and women who find it distracting to their worship and a cause for anger and alienation. Gathering at the Eucharistic table is a sign of our unity. Therefore we must be concerned with anything that would separate us from one another.

Language has a powerful influence in our lives. Our words help shape reality as we see it. They let others know our basic attitudes and prejudices. Words help build the bridges of our communication to others. However, our words can convey a meaning that we do not intend.

Most of us do not remember when we first began to talk. Language is usually learned effortlessly and almost unconsciously. For this very reason we often fail to see the hidden meaning of many words and expressions. Our task then is to re-evaluate what our language is really saying. What is the hidden message we convey? By our use of language are we reinforcing the stereotypes of female inferiority and male superiority? Do our words make women invisible? The terms 'man' and 'men' have become so intimately tied to the meaning of male person that they can no longer be considered broad enough to apply to all people. Do the words we use cause some women or minorities to be alienated from our community? Have the words we use in our prayers made God too small? God is transcendent, why then do we refer to God as male?

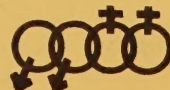
Words are important. If we want our organization to reflect the Gospel imperative of justice and if we are to heed Jesus' call of unity and freedom, then we must be concerned with language. For it is our language which reflects our commitment to the affirmation of the value and dignity of each person.

GUIDELINES FOR LANGUAGE IN LITURGY

1. Generic words such as man, men, mankind, and all men should be replaced with words that explicitly include everyone.
Men - us, people.
Brothers - neighbors, people, persons.
Fathers - ancestors, forerunners, parents, precursors, forebearers.
Mankind - humanity, human race, people.
Fellowship - community, family.
2. The use of the male pronouns reinforce the idea of male dominance. Whenever possible avoid the use of 'he', 'him', and 'his' by using plural pronouns or using 'one' or by the use of the second person.
3. If the Scripture of the day calls for a passage with sexist attitudes, there are two alternatives:
 - a. substitute another passage.
 - b. explain the passage carefully, e.g., Paul's cultural conditioning, the assumptions of the era. Do not use sexist passages without explanation.
4. Readings - Read the Scriptures in sexually balanced language.
5. Prayers - Use sexually balanced language, e.g., not "pray brothers" but "pray brothers and sisters", not "for all men" but "for all people" or "for all".
6. Use of nonsex specific words for God, such as Spirit, Wisdom, Holy One, Eternal One, Sustainer, Creator, Advocate, Defender or Redeemer.
7. Names for God should avoid "excessive" use of male imagery e.g., King, Master, and Father. Possible alternatives, Yahweh, Mother/Father, Parent, 'Abba God' or by repeating the word God.
8. Avoid sexist hymns. If sexist language in a hymn can't be changed, substitute another hymn. The St. Louis Jesuits are coming out with corrected versions of their songs which eliminate gender problems.

(Some of the ideas in these guidelines were taken from "Guidelines for Religious Language" Published by the Quixote Center.)

Marybeth
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THE WORD MADE FLESH: LANGUAGE AND THE NATURE OF GOD

I. Language of the Culture

- A: Language of the dominant class/caste/sex
- B. English as a male-dominant language
 - 1. Description of "weighted pairs"
 - 2. Values expressed in pairing
- C. English as a female-subordinating language

II. Language of our Religious Tradition

- A. Patriarchalism
- B. God as male diety
- C. Church as male dominated
- D. Female position as "other"
 - 1. Ascription of "evil"
 - 2. Uncleaness (ritual and otherwise)
 - 3. Ascription of temptress to females

III. Language of Theology

- A. Attributes of God by analogy
- B. God as "Other"
 - 1. Transcendence
 - 2. Ineffability, etc.
- C. Humankind's finitude and inability to understand God except in the language of the dominant culture

IV. Christianity in "Diaspora"

- A. Present day Christianity out of the mainstream of cultural trends
- B. Need to speak to those in the mainstream
- C. Need to speak to Christians within the church
- D. Need to speak to Christians outside the "traditional church" (i.e. MCC, etc.)
 - 1. Inability to be heard if we do not speak in a language which is acceptable to them
- E. Church in kerygma: announcing the Good News to the people (including alienated women)
- F. Church in diakonia: whom do we serve and how?
- G. Church in koinonia: how do we serve those who are in community with us?

V. A New View of God

- A. The same God but spoken of in a new language
- B. Inclusive language: a rationale

VI. Inclusive language as the language of Liberation Theology

THE WORD MADE FLESH: THEOLOGY IN LANGUAGE

A

English, as many languages, is class, caste, and sex differentiated. Class distinctions are primarily those of dialect and usage. Certain grammatical constructions and pronunciations immediately stamp the speaker as having been educated well or poorly and are reasonably good indications of social class. ^{Quotation} Other constructions would immediately stamp the user (sight unseen) as a Black person. An example of this is "It's mines," or the use of been, as in the sentence, "He been gone." English is caste differentiated, and there are certain Black usages no white person would attempt unless trying to be ^{"hip,"} amusing or "folksy." English is also sex-differentiated. Few males would use words like cerise, azure, darling, chic or cozy. Nor would males make certain intonations in asking questions -- these are purely female usages -- or are the usages of effeminate males and thus open to ridicule and laughter when used by men. ~~that~~ is the difference, if you will, between the King's English and the "queen's English."

EXPAND

B

Because ours is a male-dominant society with certain prerogatives allowed males which are not allowed females, and with certain privileges accruing to male-ness which do not accrue to femaleness, our language is also male-dominant. This is best seen in the fact that since English has no neuter pronoun which is easily used, and language usually takes the path of least resistance, it is a common convention in English to use male pronomials and generics. An example of this is that of following anyone with he. "If anyone has lost a pencil, will he please raise his hand." Very typically, anyone and everyone is assumed to be male. A similar usage is that of mankind, and Man, for humankind. Females are subsumed under the heading of males, and in our society, females' place is subsumed under that of males. Our language reflects our culture. Because of this socio-linguistics has identified that males ask fewer questions, are



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continue these traditions, carried in our culture as values, and enforced by a system of sanctions and rewards for acquiescence. Because many of these attitudes had their beginnings in the desert cultures (nomadic, pastoral, sheep-hearding Israel) which are told in the stories of the Biblical Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, these are often referred to as patriarchal attitudes.^{* ref.} Many of them do indeed begin in the Old Testament, and it is to testamental roots that we owe much of the burden carried by women in our society. Proverbs shows us the difference between the good wife and the shrew, and our society continues these as values and *perjoratives*. From the story of Adam and Eve, our society carries the view of woman as temptress of the pure, noble savage Adam, who fell into the wily clutches of the serpent via the temptations of his wife Eve. However, most modern women reading this ancient myth, would be sorely tempted not to remark on Adam's stupidity, crassness, and inability to think for himself. *as dia Elis. Cady Stanton. * quote.* Women generally do not think of Adam as misled, merely dumb. They do, however, internalize the guilt which has been given to them for the fall of Mankind ever since. ^P From scripture has also come the undervaluing of female accomplishment. Few women are spoken of in the Bible, few of these accomplish much of anything, and the ones who do are generally kept silent about in most churches. Few people would be able to identify Deborah, Huldah, and Jael and the stories about them. Most of us would be able to identify Delilah, Bathsheba, and Jezebel. The church *has* used Scripture well to keep women in *their* its place. ^{* illustration.} Because the church, particularly in Protestantism, has been entirely male-dominated, male-selective, and male-ideationed, women have been seen as "the OTHER" and males as the norm for society. What is good for men is right and proper so to do. What has been good for women is wrong, wrong, wrong.

This is also true in our picture of God. Almost any small child will give you a picture of God as an elderly, white male with a long flowing beard.

GOD:HUMANITY::PARENT:CHILD

Thomas Aquinas in the Summa Theologica states that all names for God are analogies. God is "father," but not a human male, "mother" but not a female, "rock of our salvation," but not made of stone certainly, "Rose of Sharon," but not a flower, "eagle" and "hen" but not a bird. To say otherwise is to lessen the infinitude of God.

Customs and myths, ritual and usages become established in cultures and remain long after their usefulness has ended. Language is like this. Theologian Robert Jensen says "A language activity pursued in defiance of history, with ears stopped to the question of meaning, will pervert and distort all life. The language itself that is thus made a weapon against sense and honesty will disintegrate inwardly until its utterances arrive at that point of logical chaos where they are nonsensical. A life that sought its religious reality in such empty words would be what is meant by hell."

Tillich speaks of myths which have outlived their usefulness as "broken myths. The warrior God, Jahweh, to a generation that is sick of the conquest of small nations by the powerful might well be a mythic concept which has outlived its time and an analogy which may need to be replaced by another. It is not Jahweh but the tribal warrior myth which is the "broken" image and other descriptions and ascriptions and attributes may need to be found for Jahweh/Eloi. They are there.

I was a child whose mother abandoned the family when I was not yet a year old, and I grew up motherless. It was with great joy that

I discovered the concept of El Shaddai -- the God who nurtures us at the breast -- from the Hebrew word for breast shad. Here was an infinite mother whom I had not experienced in childhood, and who would now hold me eternally. I had an earthly father, a Calvinist minister; harsh, cold, arrogant and vengeful. For me, the concept of "God as Father" brings images of a stern, forbidding, angry Jahweh, the jealous God -- disapproving and condemning. How different another person's image might be. Many of us had loving mothers, nurturing and caring; many of us had fathers who loved us, protected us and guided us in our childhood and youth, and even into adulthood. Because of his attitude toward my homosexuality, I have not seen my father but three times in 20 years. I am still not welcome at home.

God as "Father" for me is an unhappy image. God as El Shaddai provides me with a loving alternative.

For many people in our community, the use of "father" or "mother" as a name for God may well be an unfortunate choice.

To doctrinally insist that we worship "God the Father" may well divide many people who need to be included in our community.

All names for God are accurate images for God, and it was Origen who first helped us to realize that all names for God are merely images -- pictures. No name for God truly succeeds in describing God. If we are honest, we have no word for God which truly captures all of God's attributes. Yet every way we speak of God describes some one attribute accurately. How shall we name God? How shall we speak of God? Scripture speaks to us of God's words in describing Godself only in action, or as Mary Daly affirms, "God as Verb."

We know God not as something we can look at and name -- nominally -- but verbally, by what God does. Hebrew, by its structure, is a verbal ~~lan~~ language. All things are named by their function. In Hebrew, we find a God who says, "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." God describing Godself by action. Asked for a name, God's reply was "I AM THAT I AM" (or more accurately "I AM WHAT I AM BECOMING") and God whose very name is action.

We become so sure of our knowledge of God. What do we actually know of the nature of God? Jesus says, "God is spirit, and we must worship God in spirit and in truth." God is spirit -- ineffable, untouchable, truly unnamable. Our temptation is always to limit God to what we know. What do we know? Only that God is like us in that we are in God's image, but that God is other than us because it would be hubris to think that we are God. We are in God's image and after God's likeness. I am female and a mother. If I am like God, God must be female and a mother. You are male and a father? God must be like you and a father. What of my sister who has never borne a child, or my brother who has not sired one? Is God not like them also? Are they not also in the likeness and image of God?

All images of God are true, yet none of them is accurate. God is like a mother, a father, a rock, an eagle, a hen, a creative hand, a voice in the whirlwind, a non-consuming fire; but God is not these and only these. God is all this and infinitely more. Creator, ground of our being, the ineffable, the unknowable, yet capable of being known and loved; and capable of acting as a personal presence in our lives.

For you "Father" is a summation. For me, "El Shaddai" answers a deep-felt need. For each of us one attribute outweighs another, but which is God? What is God? None of us know and no one has come back to tell us. We only have the visions of those who have caught a glimpse of the glory, and with Origin and Thomas Aquinas we can only agree that by whatever image we describe God, our description is an analogy. I can tell you what God is like -- I cannot tell you what God is. Tell me what God is like for you. Let us share our visions, but let us not limit each other's view of the glory.

There is a Zen proverb which says, "The finger pointing at the moon is not the moon." Different images for God merely point us to God, they do not change God, but enable us to speak about our perceptions of God. Let us not demand therefore that everyone point to God with the same finger -- but let us keep on pointing to God, so that others may find the One God, whom all may worship in spirit and in truth.

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THE WORD MADE FLESH: LANGUAGE AND THE NATURE OF GOD

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Billy for Paul

{ Larry called to see article
{ Bill in Hartford

Mike - 272-8482

- Dorothy - Court April 26 -

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centered view
of God

Wounded Wader
P. 30-35

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

W. 38
P. 30-35
W. 38

Male lodge -
Lit Theol Ruether 97

Shaping of Xtrinity (ref to above)
Lit Theol Ruether 97

Dualism -
Lit Theol Ruether 99

Woman as Evil
Lit Theol Ruether 101

Male Ideology, definition + use
of women
Lit Theol Ruether 102

Redemption via "maleness"
Lit. Theol Ruether 102

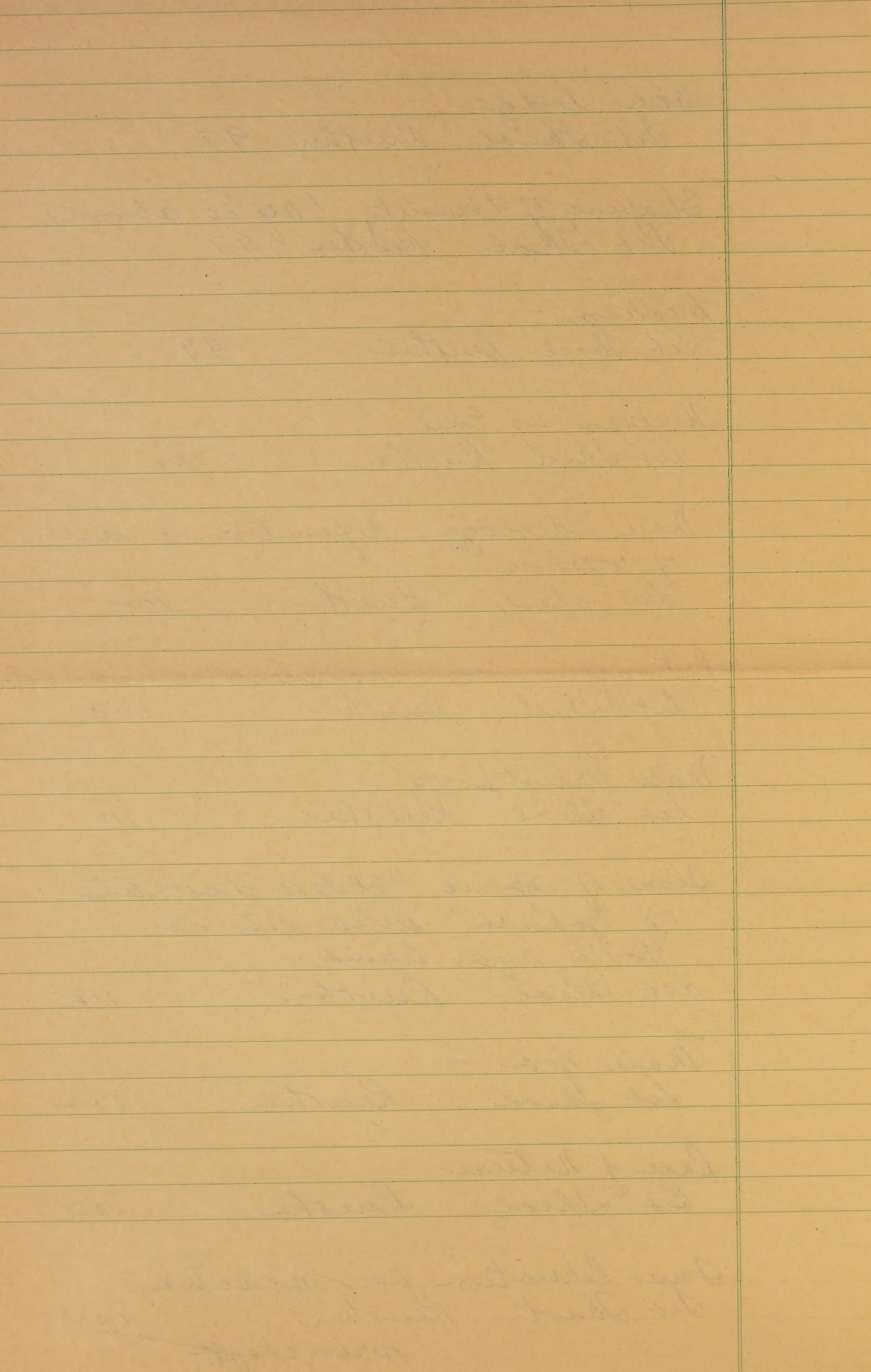
Male Priesthood
Lit. Theol Ruether 111

Term. of spirit "Elders daughters
of Yahweh" who sits at
God's right hand.
Lit. Theol. Ruether 112

Male god -
Lit Theol Ruether 122

Life of Nature
Lit Theol Ruether 123

True liberation as monistic
Lit Theol Ruether 124
prev chapter



Theol of liberation
Lit Theol Ruenher

P. 166

"Is" + "Ought"

Lit Theol Ruenher

P. 167

"Liberal", "Radical" + "Still more"

Lit. Theol Ruenher

P. 167

unwillingness of those who
can act to do so.

168

Lit Theol Ruenher

169

Fault of "liberals"

Lit Theol. Ruenher

169

170

Messianic hope in

Lit. Theology (C.A. + Black)

Lit. Theol Ruenher

, 81

"Faith is presented as a factor of
change directed toward a more
just & humane society."

Lit Theol Ruenher

"liturgy as liberation"

Lit Theol

Ruenher

181-182

TOWARD
END
LANG
CHANGE

Loving name more than one
who gave it.

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 129

No name is safeguard against
idolatry Ramsey 129

El Shaddai

God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 130

Son of
Man

Nickname - fewest possible empirical
connections, filled out "in use."

1. Used by Jesus of himself

2. I like "I am I"

3. Aramaic means "human".

4. Title never understood by

Equated to Messiah + risen

Son of Man = Crucified + Messiah

5. = JHVH in sacredness -

Words like "son" + "father" only
provide models.

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 185

"Son of
Man"

"Son of God" "Son eternally generated
from God" "Son of one substance
w/ God". Shorthand

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 187

μονογενής

(monogenēs) (only child) (only begotten) [Son]
"unique".

Relig. Language Ramsey 187-188

Tautology?

Interest in language

Relig. Language Ramsey 11

God - He -

Relig. Language - Ramsey 14

Bigotry & idolatry

Relig. Language Ramsey 19

Theological language - nicknames

Relig. Language Ramsey 43

Words for God

1. Attributes of negative theol.
 2. Characterization of God as
Unity, Simplicity, Perfection
 3. First cause, etc
- Theol Lang. Ramsey } P. 56

Creation ex nihilo

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 80

Language of the Bible is governed
by special rules - It is odd
language

Relig. Language Ramsey 122

Naming God

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 124-35

I'm I is not a name

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 127
128

Name is not a label

Relig. Lang. Ramsey 128

Ennoia thetos - immanent logos
Prophorikos - Logos proceeding forth

Metaphor - Each metaphor can
only describe one aspect of the nature
of Deity (Bethune-Baker)
Relig. Lang. Ramsey 190

If B.B. is right; Xian doctrine
will never give us a blueprint of
God.

Son of God Mother of God
(God-bearer
(Theotokos))

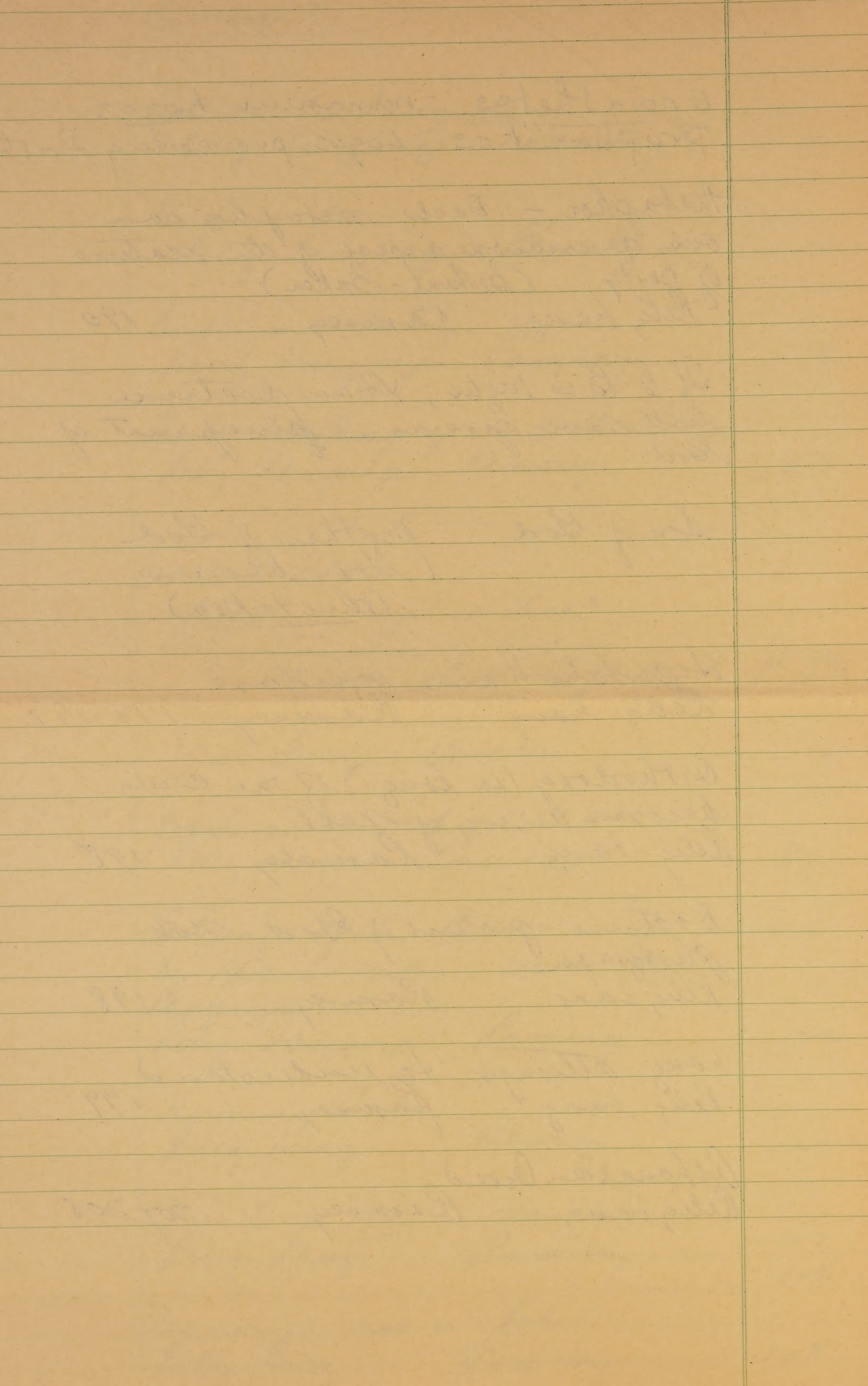
Hypostatic Union question
Relig. Lang. Ramsey 194-197

Orthodoxy (in lang.) of one cent
becomes heresy of next.
Relig. Lang. Ramsey 198

Doctrine - picture of God not
photograph
Relig. Lang. Ramsey 198

Lang. attempt to understand
Relig. Lang. Ramsey 199

Athanasian Creed
Relig. Lang. Ramsey 207-208



LANGUAGE

HORACE BUSHNELL: Language is an imprecise instrument. Words are but "faded metaphors" which cannot be transferred from mind to mind with their meaning clear and transparent. Each word is organically related to its own history, to the history of the one who uses it and of the one who hears it, and to the situation in which it is used. With these variables, all creedal statements and even the words of Scripture must be understood in a "spirit of accommodation" for they are but linguistic and hence poetic attempts to speak the unspeakable.

From Preliminary Dissertation on Language, God & Christ (hartford, 1949): also Language and Doctrine, Christ and Theology, (Hartford, 1851) P. 176 Religion in America.

Look up Disciples of Christ polity. Suggest it as a possibility. (Presbyterian heritage, Methodist doctrines, Baptist polity and practice!.)

LANGUAGE AND THE NATURE OF GOD

I. Language of the Culture

- A. Language of the dominant class/caste/sex
- B. English as a male-dominant language *(description of "weighted pairs"?)*
- C. English as a female subordinating language

II. Language of our Religious Tradition

- A. Patriarchalism
- B. God as male diety
- C. Church as male-dominated
- D. Female position as "other"
 - 1. ascription of evil
 - 2. uncleanness (ritual and other)
 - 3. ascription of temptress to females

III. Language of Theology

- A. Attributes of God by analogy
- B. God as "other"
 - 1. Transcendence
 - 2. Ineffability, etc.
- C. Humankind's finitude and inability to understand God except in the language of the dominant culture

IV. Christianity in "diaspora"

- A. Present day Christianity out of the mainstream of the culture
- B. Need to speak to those in the mainstream
- C. Need to speak to Christians within the church
- D. Need to speak to Christians outside the "traditional" church (ie. MCC)
 - 1. Inability to be heard if we do not speak in a language which is acceptable to them
- E. Church in kerygma - announcing the Good News to the people (including alienated women)
- F. Church in Diakonos - who do we serve, and how?
- G. Church in Koinonia - how do we serve those who are in community with us?

1/24/79

Marge -

I'm writing to confirm the date
you'll be coming to the reading
group - Feb 5 - Mon - 7:30.

The Place has been changed to:

11 Medway St. (East Side)

Take 195E → Exit 3 Garo St. →

take a right off exit ramp →

Pass Waterman St. (traffic light) - take next

left which is Medway St. → go halfway

down the block to big yellow building

on left -

Ring doorbell marked J. Gottfried.

Call if this isn't clear - See you then. -

Jodi - 272-5341

1/10/11

- group

I'm writing to confirm the date
you'll be coming to the meeting

group - Feb 3 - Mon - 1:30.

The place has been changed to:

[11 Waverley St. (outside)]

Take 115E → Exit 3 (east) →

Take a right off exit ramp →

Turn right onto (115E) 115E. Waverley St. is on the left

parallel to 115E. → go halfway

past the bank to the right hand building

- 115E

115E is the main road

Call if this isn't clear - see you then

115E-115E

115E

Dear Jim -

Enclosed is an outline of the paper which I am writing as my "ordination thesis." Appended to it is the tentative bibliography. It is a fairly ambitious paper and one which I would hope would have other opportunities for publication than just MCC. (I am thinking of a journal called "SIGNS", which publishes scholarly feminist articles, and which I am preparing a slightly shorter version.)

My articles on Christianity & sexism & men, women & the Bible, plus the short article in Unity, have all been related to this topic and many of the things which I have said in them will be restated here.

I would hope that MCCAC would approve this topic & paper - John Gill & last year's Committee gave me the assurance that the paper as outlined was sufficiently scholarly & pertinent (and valuable) to be approved.

I should have the final effort with me at E. Min. Conf. and hope that you would have an opportunity to at least skim it, as written, & give an opinion. This has been an enormous piece of work & the reading alone has taken not only months but the last 3 years.

I point out to you that I am 50 years old, have spent 12 years in the church prior to my association with MCC; have been exhorter ^{for 2 yrs.}, asst. pastor ^{for some months}, & now pastor for nearly 20 months (actively pastoring since almost immediately following licensing) and have improved upon a situation both number-wise & financially following the failure of 3 other ministers.

Ordination means a great deal to me - it is the culmination of nearly 20 years

of work & if I seem impatient in
MCC terms, please understand that
part of it is due to hearing "times winged
chariots" thundering down upon me.
I have some feeling about wanting to
be ordained in this my 50th year! (If
you will, a celebration of jubilees!)
How "give a tired old lady a break?"

Hi -

3-21-79

I'm at COWIM - just had supper and have an hour to try to rest. Was on a train all night (11:15-7:15), then had time to meet Stan Harris + have breakfast with him.

I called Karen - as I said + Shelly finally called me back yesterday. We have settled whatever needed to be settled. It is painful - but done.

The usual people are here - Linda Brebner, Lynn Josselin, (not Martha Blacklock from Mother Church), Nancy Krody, Carol Etyler. It is good to see them. Many questions about you + your leaving, i.e. "Has Jean gone?" etc. Good to be with women.

From here, of course, we go to Kirkridge. Understand a Toronto MCC woman has pre-registered. Linda already worried because too many (41) women are registered for her comfort. "Too many" to be open with. Her ^{gay} paranoia is everpresent. Once again she monopolizes + less + less is done, until she has ventilated and then can get down to real work.

Great Cow M - just had supper and
have an hour to try to get
them all right (11:12-1:12), then had time
to mail 2 short stories + have breakfast

I called Karen - on 2 kids + still finally
called me back yesterday. We have better
what even needed to be better. It is painful -
but here.

The usual people are fine - Linda Barber,
Jane Gosselin, that Martin Blackwell from Ketter
(Shelby), Nancy Kray, Carol Tyler, & no
good to see them. Many questions about you
& your leaving, i.e. "the open door?" etc. Good
to be with women.

Transfer of course we go to Kirkbridge.
Understand 2 Toronto men women too go -
Meredith. Under already married because
had money (41) women are registered for the
benefit. "No money" to be open next
that marriage is important. Over again.
all marriages + has + has in class, until
she has ventilation and then can get down
to real work.

Please type or print response.

Marge

LESBIAN SOURCEBOOK SURVEY

Please fill out this questionnaire if you are interested in being listed in the Lesbian Sourcebook, to be edited by Ginny Vida in cooperation with women from the National Gay Task Force. We want to include groups which have an active, significant lesbian membership or which offer services to lesbians. (Please return to Ginny Vida, NGTF, 80 Fifth Ave., NY NY 10011.)

Name of Group, Service or Business _____

Street Address _____

Zip _____

Mailing Address (if different) _____

Telephone: area code _____ days/
hours staffed _____

(For organizations) Our group is composed of _____ lesbians only;
_____ lesbians and heterosexual women (lesbians are approx. _____ %)
_____ lesbians and gay men (lesbians comprise approx. _____ %)

Approximate number of total members in our group is _____.

Time & place of regular activities: _____

Hours when you are open to members or public: _____

Publication: title _____ single issue price _____

How often published _____ subscription rate _____

Brief description of contents: _____

How long has your group been in existence? _____

Brief description of purpose & services of your group: _____

Please list names & addresses of other active groups etc. in your area which serve the lesbian community. Thank you.

Please note: We intend to make this listing as comprehensive as possible. However, due to possible space limitations, we cannot guarantee anyone a listing at this point.

The language we speak reflects our attitudes. Our attitudes are handed down to us generation upon generation and it is difficult to express when it began. We can, however, identify one of the ways this attitude has been bolstered, ~~is~~ emphasized & enforced.

Patriarchal Attitudes

One will notice that the church has been instrumental not only as formulator of the attitudes, but also as enforcer.

(Man as Male & Female)

Because the church, particularly in Protestantism, has been almost entirely male-dominated, male-selective, & male-ideationed, women have been seen as "The other".

Radical Religion
Rel. & Sexism

Since this is the case, English has been called a male-dominant language.

Not only is it male-dominant, by its inverse it is a female subordination language. That is, female terms tend to be obscured, obliterated, subsumed in masculine terms.

Examples

1.

2.

3.

Our language, therefore, seems to have a built-in bias against woman. What is ~~masculine~~ is good, strong, healthy & whole is reflected as masculine - What is weak, evil, unwholesome, & broken is seen as female. Someone amusingly characterized the ~~two~~ dichotomy in our language as -

Within the last 20 years, a field which explores both sociology-anthropology and linguistics has arisen. This field is called socio-linguistics. As part of its ~~body of~~ ~~work~~, its purview it deals in the ways languages are spoken as well as the structure of the language. It is from socio-linguistics that we have discovered, for example, that in American English as it is spoken by males, fewer questions are asked, fewer rises in inflection, denoting uncertainty, are made by males, and fewer "qualifiers" are used. Males, in the United States, speak a more "straightforward" English; females, on the other hand, are socialized to speak circuitously, hesitantly, & questioningly.

In addition, English ~~has~~ has no neuter pronoun & when a singular neutral pronoun is required, in most cases it has been traditional to use the masculine pronouns "he, his," to indicate a person of either sex. It is also traditional in English (as in many languages) for humankind to be spoken of as "Man, Mankind," and ~~for~~ ^{to use} masculine terms for ^{the man} community affect: brotherhood, fellowship, etc.

Haweser,

Faith + Freedom
Knowledge of Things Hoped For.

Lang. + Theol. Paper

Lang.

Socio-linguistics

Dominant languages

Male / Dominant lang.

Female / Subordinating lang.

Women + words

Sex + Lang.

Lang. + Women's Power

~~God + Theol.~~

~~Language of Theol.~~
~~Analogy~~

Patriarchalism / Language of Tradition

God as Male

Church as Male dominated

Female position as "other"
(bad, unclear, evil)

Lib. Theol.

Rel + Sexism

Man as Male + Female

Patriarchal Att.

Theol.

Language of Theol.

God attributes by analogy

God as "other"

Who + Freedom

Knowledge of

Things + Hopes

Kristen Stendahl's book

Theol. "in diaspora" - Church in diaspora

Not in mainstream - peripheral
to main culture

Need to speak to those "outside"

Need to speak to those "inside"

Cannot speak if we do not speak their

kyrgma - diakonoi - koinonia

Church inside
our

language

Rhode Island Citizens
for
Equality in language
(RICE L)

Sexism in language
is damaging.

Give us a chance to
explain.

We would like to talk
with you and/or your
organization and see
how you feel about
this. Please call:

272 - 5341

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272 - 5341

